

Indiana House of Representatives

News and Information

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BISCHOFF'S METHAMPHETAMINE BILL TO SAVE TAX DOLLARS

INDIANAPOLIS – Legislation co-authored by State Rep. Bob Bischoff (D-Lawrenceburg) passed out of the House and now moves to the Senate for consideration. House Bill 1248 would allow counties to require persons convicted of methamphetamine offenses, to reimburse the county for the costs of their incarceration in the county jail.

"Taxpayers should not be responsible for paying for the incarceration of the increasing number of meth offenders," said Bischoff. "My philosophy is you do the crime, you pay for your time."

Methamphetamine, also known as "meth," is an addictive stimulant that dramatically affects the central nervous system. It is extremely dangerous to use and can cause paranoia, hallucinations, and violent behavior.

The volatile nature of the ingredients in methamphetamine likewise make its production very risky. Its increasing prevalence here in Indiana and nationally is due to the ingredients being available over-the-counter, an issue which another bill will address.

In Indiana, methamphetamine production and use has increased at alarming rates over the last few years. Arrests related to the drug increased by 47 percent from 2001 to 2003 and the number of children affected by it went up 34 percent in the same time frame.

"Because of the increase in the number of inmates associated with methamphetamine, jail costs for many counties have gone up between \$200,000 and \$400,000," estimates Bischoff. "This legislation would allow counties to require individuals sentenced on meth charges to pay the bill, taking the financial burden off the counties and the taxpayers."